THE

Hindu Message

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

Editor: T. K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar, B.A.

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THE HINDU MESSAGE stands for

(1) Self-Government for India within the British Commonwealth,
(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,
(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,
(4) Advancement of Material prosperity on a spiritual basis and
(5) Dissemination of pure Hindu Cultre.

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THE SANNYASIN.

II

BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B.A., B.L.,

Whenever vicious thoughts do thee assail,
Ah! think of his serenest holiness
And stormless moods of inner blessedness,
His sweet release from passion's gilded gaol,
Partaker in the soul's divine wassail,
A deep and holy yearning tenderness
Brings God-like tears at sight of our distress
And ceaseless woes that lust and hate entail.
Ah! see the moon of his reposeful face
Which doth the gloomy clouds of grief disperse
And seas of Godward aspirations swells.
Aye, even me, outcaste from realms of grace
That babble thus in unmelodious verse
A new and heavenly force to light impels.

Great Thoughts.

All things are full of divinity, full of soul.—*Plato.*

ॐ

So long as there is in the human heart one fibre to vibrate to the sound of what is true, pure and honest, so long as there are found, friends of truth to sacrifice their repose to science, friends of goodness to devote themselves to useful and holy works of mercy, woman-hearts to love whatever is worthy, beautiful and pure, artists to render it by sound and color and inspired accents—so long will God live in us.—*Renan.*

ॐ

Everything that depends on Self is bliss, everything that depends on another is misery.—*Manu.*

ॐ

One beam meets another in the dash of the great ocean, and becomes immediately separated in the same manner: similar indeed is the meeting of a being with other beings.—*Mahabharata.*

ॐ

If thou considerest the dignity of the giver, no gift will seem to thee little, which is given by so great a God. Yea, though he give punishment and stripes, it ought to be acceptable, for whatever he suffers to befall us he always does it for our salvation.—*Thomas a Kempis.*

ॐ

The highest wisdom of Greece was to know ourselves, the highest wisdom of India was to know our self.—*Max Muller.*

ॐ

Nature sleeps in the plant, dreams in the animal, wakes in the man.—*Schelling.*

ॐ

The blind man trembleth with fear at every straw he cometh across; so do the ignorant at the little things that happen in life.—*Sree Santananda Saraswati.*

Events of the Week

Since we last wrote, the bubble of the sanctimonious professions of the White settler in Kenya of solicitude for the natives races have been pricked by a Reuter telegram stating that some among them have repudiated the right of any one to speak on their behalf and that they were sending a deputation of their own to London. This is as it should be. It is further worthy of note that the natives are for the present form of crown colony government being carried on in preference to a self-governing colony under purely White domination. Much as one may welcome this rebuff to White pretensions, on second thoughts we are sorry for the native chiefs who have been imprudent enough as to resent the White man thinking for them also. Meanwhile, we note that Reuter has again grown to be secretive about the progress of negotiations in London. It is clear however - and on this point Mr. Sastri has done well to be unequivocal, a surprising merit which his countrymen will note with relief — that round that table are met together men who, if they fail to arrive at a just and equitable solution, will have the doubtful privilege of going down to history as the wreckers of the Empire.

* * *

Mr. C, Rajagopalachari's explanation of the difference between Council boycott and the other two boycotts is rather disingenuous. Mr. Rajagopalachari obviously finds himself in a difficulty for arguments to sustain his Diehard obstinacy to a union of all the progressive forces in the country. It had once been pointed out that the conscience of these leaders had never been actively in eruption against the failure of the boycott of schools and courts. No, says this last-ditcher, the circumstances are different. How are they please in their practical effect on the masses? A raging and tearing propaganda against schools and courts still finds these instruments of bureaucracy flourishing as green bay trees. And the Councils, not a seat has been vacant anywhere. Why should then an acknowledgment of the facts and a desire to utilise these Councils for the national cause by destroying them be dubbed disloyalty to the Congress? Here is some obfuscation of intellect surely. Mr. Rajagopalachari, by his sanctimonious talk and by hiding ugly facts, has done enough disservice already to the Congress and much more to the country. And in his new endeavours to form a cave of Adullam within the Congress, he may get the powerful support of the *Madras Mail* who, *hey presto*, thinks him the most honest Congressman alive; but by so much he will be digging the grave of his career as a public man, and even a taller man than Mr, C. R. may well hesitate on the brink on which he stands today. The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee which is a body of unbending whole-hoggers with certainly not much corresponding work to their credit are to meet shortly; and then we shall see perhaps Mr. Rajagopalachari using all these arts and tricks of his to wreck Congress work in one province at least. We hope the Tamil Nadu will be clear-eyed and not allow itself to be stampeded by men with sneaky voices and false prophetic airs into betraying that unity which is so essential for the Congress to continue the power it has been.

* * *

The judgment of the Court of Appeal in Mr. Art O'Brien's case is given *in extenso* in the daily sheets, and, according to the *New Statesman* in its issue of Saturday, May 12, that judgment has covered the British Government with confusion. "At the time of the arrests, two months ago, we commented on the absurdity (as well as on what we believed, despite the Attorney-General's opinion, to be the illegality) of Mr. Bridgeman's action," continues our contemporary. "If he had a right to do what he did, there was nothing, as we pointed out, to prevent him from arresting the Editor of the *Morning Post* and handing him over for internment, or execution, in Kilmainham Gaol. And on Wednesday, Lord Justice Atkinson said practically the same thing. 'In my opinion,' he declared 'the Home Secretary had no more right to order Mr. O'Brien's arrest than he had to order the arrest of the first man he happened to meet in the street? Mr. Bridgeman's last hope is now in the House of Lords. If the House of Lords upholds the decision of the Court of Appeal, the position will be Gilbertian." Well as our readers have known already the House of Lords did uphold the Appeal Court's decision and Mr. Bridgeman's face was saved by Mr. Cosgrave condescending "to produce the body" or bodies. And in regard to the Indemnity Bill, here is what our contemporary says: There is talk of the Government passing or trying to pass an Act to indemnify the Home Secretary. That might prevent the action for wrongful arrest which we understand Mr. O'Brien contemplates bringing against Mr. Bridgeman. But it would not get any bodies out of Irish prisons, and we imagine that Mr. Bridgeman will not be quite comfortable till they do come out. And will Mr. Bridgeman, we wonder, ever be quite comfortable any more as His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Home Department?

* * *

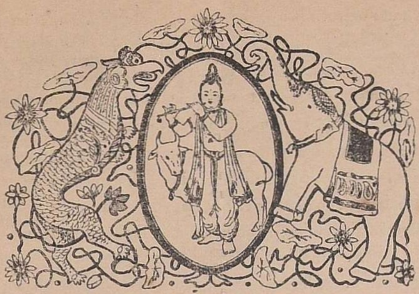
Hope springs eternal, particularly in the breasts of the Indian Liberals. And we shall watch with some interest how they are going to take the recent refusal of the new Premier to assign a day for discussion by the Commons of certification of the salt tax. Some adroit and as it turns out real adroit—legislators had pinned their hope to the Parliamentary discussion, and now that hope has been torn to the shreds. In truth, however, we think as we once said, that the time had flown past for any action to have been effective. The wisest course now will be for the Liberals to be good boys and go back to the short session in July and meanwhile roar through the Press so that the constituencies may know that they have not been ignored —especially with an election in immediate prospect.

* * *

In view of the Supersession of Lord Curzon for the Premiership, the following in an English contemporary written by its political correspondent when the mail left England will be found instructive. Who could have foreseen, even as recently as last Christmas, asks the writer, that the fortunes of the current session were so soon to be in the hands of Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Neville Chamberlain, with a star place in the limelight for Sir Douglas Hogg. "In putting the question I am no more forgetting Lord Curzon than Lord Curzon is likely (in any sense of the term to forget himself. Even however, under a Conservative Government the House of Lords remains on a siding, so far, that is to say, as any effective control over business is concerned. On their deliberative side, its functions tend more and more to be slightly spectacular. notably in providing a setting for the Foreign Minister's intrepid rehearsals for the Premiership. If Lord Curzon were in the Commons there would now, I imagine, have been little room for speculation either as to the leadership or its fruits. By this time we should have seen the Curzonian reign begin, and the session, if not the Parliament, heading towards a highly combustible climax."

* * *

The half yearly report on the progress of Civil aviation in India during the last six months of 1922 has been issued for some time now, Owing to lack of funds there has been little or no development in the sphere of civil aviation in India. The establishment of services between the longer commercial centres is dependent upon the construction of aerodromes and landing grounds on the main routes, for which purpose the small amount of money available has been entirely inadequate. This is the more regrettable, we are told, since India and Burma, apart from the fact that they are bound to be vital links in the world's air mail routes to Australia and the East in the near future are perhaps better circumstanced naturally for the development of air transport than any other countries. Meteorological conditions throughout most of the year are ideal and any difficulties arising during the monsoon are easily surmountable. Geographical conditions are also such as to invite the furtherance of aviation; on many routes railways are impracticable and the existing means of transport in such localities are slow and cumbersome and often involve considerably greater expense than would a journey by air. The large commercial centres are situated at convenient distances with respect to the speed of aeroplanes. A service between Bombay and Calcutta could be flown by night, departing with letters posted after business hours and arriving in time for their delivery before business commenced next morning, a saving of two working days per single journey. Between Calcutta and Rangoon a night air mail service taking 9 hours would save nearly 3 working days.



The Hindu Message

The A. I. C. C.'s Dicision.

The decision of the All-India Congress Committee bears a curious double face: and is prolific of troubles for Congress politics. That a centre party —which according to a facetious critic has suddenly sprung up at Bombay—has been entrusted with executive functions in the Congress is so far the only welcome piece of news we could detect. That the stern and unbending extremists will not have all their way was clear long before the A. I. C. C. met. It is only in Tamil Nadu and in Guzerat that the provincial Congress organisations—with the exception of a few individuals—had gone in plump for the irreducible Gaya programme. Mr. Ghokale of the "Mahratta" put the facts bluntly when he said that of the triple boycott, neither the courts of law were denuded of the litigants and mouldering in decay, nor were the schools emptied. The inevitable conclusion is thus forced on the mind. If the suspension of active propaganda against Council boycott weigh so heavily on conscientious politicians, how is it we have not been hearing for sometime past of the other two boycotts? Rather, had not a paralysis almost crept on Congress propaganda in regard to the boycott of schools and courts: and where was the conscience of the leaders then; and what weight did they then attach to the fourfold path of N. C. O.? Because you are not to have your own way, are you to turn round and rend a comrade, of the past and the present and the future, because wisdom that has been denied to you hath dawned on him? It may not perhaps be accurate to say that the 96 gentlemen who voted for Mr. Tanden's resolution viewed the question in this light. There is however no question that the voting endorses the view we have put forward. The Svarajya party, rather the pro-council party, have for the moment had a victory. It is not going to solve all their problems for them. Meanwhile, it is deplorable that Mr. Rajagopalachari and those others should have resigned their places on the Working Committee. Think over it as best as we can, we cannot help concluding that these leaders view the larger interests of the country from the stand-point of a narrow egotism. The vote of the All-India Congress Committee does not question the wisdom of the Gaya resolutions, or in fact any one of the planks of the non-violent non-co-operation gospel. In view of the political conditions in the country which demand a united front at all costs, it has been deemed necessary to lift the ban on votes. This is a very different thing from enjoining Congressmen to contest elections. The gentlemen of opposite persuasion, the die-hard N. C. Os have held the field undisputed for three long years: and nobody will contend the results have been commensurate with the time and money expended. Now that a party, within the Congress be it noted, desires a change of tact, the Congress says no impediments shall be put in their way except as are inherent in the conditions of the problem. Of that party or its programme there is no call to enter into a detailed examination here: that may wait for a later day. All that we are concerned here is to point out that, at the present stage of political thought in the country, it is important that the Congress should carry a step forward its principle of controlling all local bodies. True it may not help overmuch. But it is all the same a necessary process. Much depends on what the Svarajya party intends to do when once inside the Councils. Of this we have no present, definite indications. Should the Svarajjists look to the Congress for mandate or guidance and should the prosecution of the constructive programme still go on with rigour in the country, then indeed we would be launching a mass attack on the bureaucracy. In any case the majority have work enough to do, in which they have got a right to expect the loyal eo-operation of the Svarajjists. Unfortunately Mr. Rajagopalachari, according to a telegram of Tuesday, seems to think still that the Congress is not absolved from carrying on a boycott propaganda. This is the height of a foolish obstinacy. And moreover it cuts away the prestige of the Congress from under—a prestige of which Mr. Rajagopalachari has shown very lively appreciation. The demands of conscience none may gainsay, but it is a meaningless quibble to bring it in where not principles but policies are concerned. Truth to say, the country does not set much store by the Councils: and the political spirit of the people have been

deadened by the opiates of Tolstoyan and Jainistic twaddle introduced into politics and other secular affairs. The leaders of the Congress truly have eyes, but do not see, have ears but do not hear. Both the Svarajjists and the orthodox N. C. O.s. are on trial: and may God grant both the wisdom to see the right and follow the same. We shall have occasion to refer to this once again; meanwhile we wish the triumphant leader of the minority, Mr. C. R. Das a happy sojourn in the Presidency.

Mr. Das's Campaign.

As we went to Press last week, Mr. C. R. Das opened his campaign in Madras, which he then visited for the first time. He made two speeches on the sands at Triplicane, the first on May 30 and the other on the 1st instant. On the first occasion Mr. Das was content with inaugurating in as wide terms as possible the new campaign of his party: and in the process spent the best part of his speech in refuting criticisms of himself and in making sly, and sometimes damaging remarks against the Congress itself, which ill accorded with the professions of most of these dissentients that the prestige of the Congress is a thing of great value to them. A fighting speech may well be a foolish speech as well: and those who care to go carefully through the reports of his speech will find it hard to deny that in portions it was unnecessarily harsh to the Congress and its policies. We are reminded of the opinion of the poet that

Life is not rounded in an epigram,
And saying aught we leave a word unsaid.

Only we cannot help believing that if Mr. Das had been briefer in his exposition he might have gained more of the desired effect. Nor, do we think, he helped forward an appreciation of the aims of his party by an excessive display of egotism. Egotism, we hasten to observe, is good and sits well on a leader of a party as Mr. Das undoubtedly is, but it should not be obtusive. Madras having had the reputation of being the most formidable enemy of the pro-changers, no doubt Mr. Das was led to being more elaborate than elsewhere. Yet it is gravely doubtful, barring his attacks on the Congress, if he ever clearly gave us to understand what his Party stands for. A policy of capturing the Councils is all very well in words. But what ends would he have the Councils subserve when once he had captured them? Would he carry on a systematic policy of obstruction of all measures, good and bad, irrespective of the merits? What does he mean by his formulating a National Demand? What will be the terms of the demand? And why does he shift the burden on to the shoulders of the electorate of formulating the National Demand? Is it not rather the function and the duty of the leaders to formulate the demand and get the electors to ratify the same? And would Mr. Das be content if this Demand, whatever its nature be and of which, in effect, he speaks in the haziest of tones, be met by a Government offer of a short time limit to the realisation? And should Mr. Das decide to accept such an assurance, how does his party stand differentiated from the Liberals who live by faith on such promises? And where then is the deed for an independent third party in our politics? Apart from an incurable egotism, we are willing to admit that Mr. Das has got claims to our respect and esteem such as few others have in these degenerate times. But all these are questions that arise directly from his many speeches. We do not wish to refer to the small-minded bravado with which he refers to possibly contumacious majority leaders. The great and fatal defect of all fighting programmes is in the end that emphasis may fasten on the fighting and the programme be anyhow lost sight of. The very nebulousness of leaders' pronouncements makes us fear of some such fate overtaking the Svarajya party's programme as well. And when it comes to a question of mere fighting, it is a thousand to one that it will end in a fratricidal war of which there is just a faint glimmer on the horizon. We trust in his peregrinations through the Presidency Mr. Das will speak out on the questions raised above. And it would be well if now and then Mr. Das will realise that some small share of the debacle in the Congress policies and performances ought to attach to him also, as he is one of its chosen leaders; and it is to miss the value of things to go on speaking as if one man alone possessed an impeccable heart or had the vision to see straight into the heart of things. Such talk, while it may help wasting time by springing unnecessary controversies, will not forward by one inch that unity on which alone depends our ordered march to our goal.

An Empire Problem.

Notice of as many as four resolutions have been given by honourable members of the Legislative Assembly for its short session next month, dealing with the question of the Indians Overseas. But as is so usual with our wiseacres, it would seem that they hug the preposterous notion that it only requires that India should be represented at the forthcoming session of the Imperial Conference by elected non-official Indians. This is going counter to all wisdom and even political prudence. All that can be gained by Indian participation in an Imperial Conference, all that can be gained that is to say in arriving at a solution of this vexed Indian question has been gained at the Imperial War Conference of 1918. The real solution of this problem, the only way in which gentlemen beyond the seas who claim chromatic and sartorial kinship with the King-Emperor can be taught to think that at their peril they treat Indians as helots within the Empire, is found in Lord Sinha's famous resolution on reciprocity at the 1918 Conference. We remember Sir George Barnes throwing up his hands in horror at any idea of retaliating on the Colonies. We confess that looked at from a broad point of view retaliation is impossible: for the colonial has only to apply for a naturalisation as an Englishman to evade our ban: and this is done in a trice. That raises another, and far more vital issue, as we all can see. Meanwhile, we shall return to those people—there are such even amongst us—who talk of the futility and the unwisdom of retaliation. The members of the bureaucracy have a smooth way of theirs, of hanging a man, and, lest he should feel desolate, of lecturing to him on the exceedingly hopeful chances of the rhythmic swing of his dangling body delighting thousands of onlooking

human hearts. And some Indians are only too ready to applaud this original remark. We think, and the country thinks, that if every colonial-born who fattens on the taxed salt of this country and is engaged in prosecuting the White Man's burden in this land is made to feel by penal and prohibitive legislation that the trodden worm can turn, the problem will solve itself in the twinkling of an eye. It is not the Imperial Conference or the official Indian participation therein that is at fault. It is the lack of courage or of power or of both in our loud-voiced representatives that keeps off an acceptable and just solution of the problem. Now, what are the facts? Take South Africa, whose representatives flatly refused to have anything to do with the hated equality principle. In that country, for whose difficulties that great Empire Apostle, the Rt. Hon. Sastri is willing to make such allowances in the spirit of the diplomat to the manner born, they are forging ahead with pieces of legislation which are intended to slowly strangle the Indian out of existence. To name these weapons, they are the Township Franchise, Rural Licensing and Land Alienation Ordinances, and a private member's motion for segregation of Asiatics. Of these the second and third were once vetoed, but were subsequently re-introduced and passed by the Natal Provincial Assembly. And a Reuter message sometime last month informed us that a deputation of the Natal Indian Congress to the authorities concerned, anent these iniquitous ordinances proved of no effect. As regards the Land Alienation ordinance, we have it from Mr. Duncan Baxter, a former member of the South African Legislative Assembly and a member of the Asiatc Enquiry Commission that it is a restriction of the existing rights of ownership, and in the case of ex-indentured Indians and their descendants forms a breach of the conditions of their recruitment. Neither good feeling nor fair play has, as we have only too abundantly seen, any influence on the South African Whites in their treatment of the Indians. The problem in Kenya is still a festering sore: and Gen. Smuts is prepared to support the Whites in their filibustering ambitions. And our legislators must be incurably stupid if they think their foolish resolutions are going to help the cause forward. It is a problem of momentous import to the Empire: and it is for our legislators to be stiff-backed and make the Government realise the awful catastrophe that will face them and the Empire, failing a just and reasonable solution of the problem.

Social and Religious.

The Bhagavad Gita.

With an English Exposition

By K. S. RAMASWAMY SASTRI, B.A., B.L.

(The substance of the lectures delivered at the Students' Sanatana Dharma Sabha, Trichinopoly,)

ADHYAYA X

(*continued*)

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।
जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥

Of those who play games of chance I am the gambling. I am the splendour of splendid things; I am victory; I am effort; and I am the Sattwa of the Sattwic beings.

NOTES

1. Gambling was a royal pasture in ancient days.

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनंजयः ।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥ ३७ ॥

Of the Vrishnis I am Vasudeva, of the Pandavas I am Dhananjaya (Arjuna); of men of meditation, I am Vyasa; and of men of vision I am Kavi Ushanas.

दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जीगीषताम् ।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥

Of punishers I am the power of punishment; of those who seek victory I am the principle of just statesmanship; of secret things I am silence; and I am the wisdom of wise men.

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।
न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥३९॥

Whatsoever is the seed of all beings, that am I, O Arjuna. There is nought, moving or fixed, which can exist independently of me.

NOTES

1. That is because He is the cause, both material and efficient and the universe is but the effect. Cause and effect are identical कार्यस्य कारणमात्रत्वात् ।

2. The Purusha Sukta says:

यच्च किंचिज्जगत्सर्वं दृश्यते श्रूयतेऽपि वा ।
अन्तर्बहिश्च तत्सर्वं व्याप्य नारायणः स्थितः ॥

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परंतप ।
एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ॥ ४० ॥

There is no end to my divine manifestations, O conqueror of foes! What has been declared to you by me is but a fragmentary statement of my glory.

यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोंशसंभवम् ॥ ४१ ॥

Whatever being is glorious, prosperous or mighty, know that it is derived from a fragment of my glory.

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।
विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥ ४२ ॥

But of what avail is it to know, O Arjuna, these details by enumeration? I exist, supporting the entire universe by a portion of myself.

NOTES

1. The Sruthi declares: पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ।

2. The Advaitins regard these passages as showing

that the Lord has declared that the Vibhutis show the *Dhyeya Brahman* whereas His real nature is Nirupadhika and Sachchidananda (त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि) The Visishtadwaitins affirm that the distinction is between Narayana's Para Swarupa and His Vibhutis.

3 The Tenth Chapter has been summed up thus in the Gitartha Sangraha:

स्वकल्याणगुणानन्त्यकृत्स्नस्वाधीनता मतिः
भक्त्युत्पत्तिविवृद्ध्यर्थं विस्तीर्णा दशमोदिता ॥

To be continued.

Agricultural.

Land-Problems in India.

By V. Rangaswamy Aiyangar.

(*continued*)

General administrative machinery.

Villages were classified under the following heads.

1. Villages exempted from taxation. (2) villages that supplied soldiers. (3) villages that paid taxes. (a) in grain, (b) in cattle, (c) in gold, (d) in forest produce, and (e) that supplied free labour etc. There were State officials to look after each group of villages numbering from 5 to 10 according to locality by the direction of the authority Number of villages formed a district. There was a Collector-general for 4 districts. His principal functions were: (1) supervision of census operations for which there were permanent establishment, (2) collections of revenues, (3) checking of account. (4) Land Survey etc.

Village administration. The headman of each village had power to dispose of criminal and civil cases in small matters, and had also power to report thieves and adulterers. There were courts of justice for trying grave offences. The King with his ministers and learned Brahmans formed the highest court of appeal. There was one officer for a group of four villages. His duties were to take census of every caste or occupation and ascertain the income and expenditure of each family, and number of quadruple animals in each house. The village headmen were entrusted with the charge of wife and children of those who died on duty and of infants, aged persons, orphans and minors etc, who were in need of protection. Widows, disabled men and girls were provided with suitable works. There were State weaving factories to give work to the unemployed.

As the present (British Government) in India hold, that their land policy, is but the legacy handed down to them from the ancient rulers of the land, we have to pause here and inquire, what exactly the principle, if any, that guided this first Hindu state known to the Indian History, in regulating the state demands on land.

The author of "The ancient history of India" Mr. Vincent Smith, in his latest volume, characterises the Chandragupta's reign as "Autocracy tempered for Brahmins" and as a necessary corrollary to this theory, he wants to make his readers believe that the revenue derived from land is but *rent* collected from "Crown lands". Mr. V. Smith does not doubt however that this adminstration was conducted according to the *Arthasastra* and any casual reader of its pages will have no difficulty in knowing that it is based on the sacred writings of the Hindus which are designated by the generic name Dharma (Sacred law).

"Dharma (sacred law, as defined in the Arthasastra is eternal truth holding its sway over the world" (Mr. Sama Sastri's translation page 191). In the same page, we find the following passage "whenever there is disagreement between history and sacred law or between evidence and sacred law, then the matter shall be settled, in accordence with sacred law". The Vedas as we have already pointed out enjoins that the king shall conduct the affairs of state, which should be an embodiment of the public opinion and they give no countenance whatever to the theory of autocracy or state ownership in the soil The renowned Greek historians of this particular period when India was invaded by Alexander the Great, tell us, that the Hindu states of that time, were guided or controlled by the sacred law of the Hindus and non-conformity or disobedience to that law by ruling kings, resulted either in dethronements or deaths, (vide page 25). Thus the Hindu Sovereigns of olden times, were constitutional rulers although they differed from their modern prototypes in form and methods. It is true that Chandragupta wielded extraordinary powers and collected as he actually did more taxes than was permitted by the sacred law. A little reflection is enough to justify him in the eye of that sacred law and humanity. Chandragupta, as Mr. V. Smith himself points out, had to engage himself in the consolidation of his Empire "weakened by disunion, dissipation, and strife from within, and had also to organise against the threatened invasion of Salukus for the recovery of Alexander's conquest. The time did need a strong Dictator of the type of Ceasar or Napoleon and that strong Dictator was found in Chandragupta aided by the great Statesman Kautilya. The Arthasastra (translation by Mr. Shama Sastry page 6) refers to a branch of Science of Government which treats of what is expedient and inexpedient (Nayanaya), as well as potency and impotence (Balabala). In other words, the sacred law allows the sovereign to adopt special measures to deal with the emergencies.

For Chandragupta to raise more revenue from land, he had the support of the sacred law. Manu says;—" A military King who takes a fourth part of the crops of his realm at a time of urgent necessity as of war or invasion and protects his people to the utmost of his power commits no sin" (Chapter 118). Are not the foremost democratic states at this hour, clothing their chief executives with powers of high-handed nature and permitting them to take as much as they could from the people in the shape of taxes, subscriptions, loans and to have recourse to all sorts of mothods which in ordinary times, will be considered intolerable and reprehensible, in order to put down Prussianism and thus to save humanity from its clutches?

In the light of what is said above, we are quite warranted in saying that Mr. V Smith's opinion referred to respecting Chandragupta's reign, finds no support either in theory or in facts. And his history containing as it does very many valuable information hitherto unknown, about our remote past has certainly failed in the fundamental task of interpreting facts concerning our ancient institutions in terms of ideals for which they stood. His Anglo Indian prejudice against our civilisation and Brahminism is perhaps responsible for the contemptuous epithet namely "wily Brahmin" applied to the great statesman and the renowned author of the Arthasastra, which work in spite of this undignified language is exacting admirtion and homage from all unbiassed scholars and great statesmen, East or West;

The following may be taken as a brief sketch of the land problems of this country from ancient days down to our own times.

The Hindu states all over India were governed according to the sacred law. The administrative

machineries of every state were modelled after those described in the sacred writings. The ruler was anything but on autocrat, claimed no proprietory right to soil which belonged solely to the landholders or Bhumicars. During troublous times, taxes were increased. The acts of state, in a word, tended to promote agriculture, art and industry and everything pertaining to the well-being of the people. The Mahomedan rulers, with some exceptions after the first waves of religious fury and fanaticism were over, followed the beaten tracts of their Hindu predecessors and the administrative machineries and the land systems were preserved intact. But these institutions began to decay from the declining days of the Mogal Eempire although their fabric as a whole was not undermined. The policy adopted by the British rulers tended only to uproot the administrative machine and the land systems of the Hindus without providing proper substitute on the lines of the West to suit the modern progressive age.

If any body doubts the accuracy of this description, we shall entreat him to go through a memorable volume which treats of the land systems of various states and incidentally of the political systems both in the West and the East, particularly of this country, from the early times. This volume is entitled 'Land tax in India.' It was orginally a memorial submitted to the Britsh Parliament in 1830 by an eminent Anglo-Indian scholar of vast experience of this country, an officer in the Madras Army, a member of the Royal Asiatic society, of the literary society of Bombay and of the Asiatic geographical and statistical societies of Paris. His name is Leiut Colonel John Briggs. Every page of this volume will not fail to impress the reader with the author's sympathetic insight into the genius of the civilisation of the Hindus and Mohamedans, his intimate acquaintance with our life, the marvellous labour spent by him in getting at first hand information and his able presentment of fact, his love of truth, justice and humanity and above all the courage displayed by him in exposing the wrongs that were being inflicted by his countrymen especially on the agricultural population of this country.

We refer here to several notable passages from the book illustrative of what we have said.

In the beginning of the work he says:—'It has been too generally asserted that all the land in the East belongs to the Crown. This idea met with confirmation from modern travellers, who do not appear to have sufficiently investigated the subject. In the year 1777 M. Augue de du Perron, one of the most celebrated oriental scholars in Europe, after a long residence in India, combated these erroneous doctrines and took great pains to prove in an essay he wrote on this question (Legislation oriental) that not only was the notion false, but the state of society described by some travellers, who denied even the existence of any private property at all in the East, neither did nor could exist under the actual circumstances of those nations. M. Anquetil du Perron proved that property in Asia was carefully protected by laws as in Europe; yet he did not deny that these laws were frequently infringed though often at the risk of the life or the Crown or the prince."

Land tax East and West.

Greece In the republics of Athens and Sparta the conquerors divided the lands and compelled the vanquished inhabitants to cultivate for them as slaves.

The cultivated land paid one tenth of the produce to the State.

Rome:- The portion of the crop demarcated by the State was confined to one tenth of the produce.

Ancient Persia, China, Burman Empire and Cochin-China and Siam:—The cultivator paid one tenth of the produce. In the last named country 'The amount of the land-tax is estimated at four per cent of the gross produce.' With reference to China our author says "The above is however sufficient to show that the Sovereign is not the proprietor of the soil, but has only a share, and not a very considerable one, of the produce".

India at the time of Alexander's invasion: "It is curious to observe" says the author "how this state of the laws struck the ancients(Greeks) The historians of Alexander, and after them Strabo and Diodorus according to Dr. Robertson (Robertson's India), give the following picture of Hindu society:—Though monarchical government was established throughout India, the sovereign authority was far from being uncontrolled.

The Brahmins or priests, were of the highest and most sacred class, and their office required them to warn the sovereign, when his conduct was contrary to the laws of the realm. Their admonition and even their censures were to be received with submissive reverence; and instances are recorded of those monarchs who refused to be guided by their advice, being deposed and even put to death While such deference was due to the sacred character of the Brahmins, the public officers of the Government, whether Military or Civil, were for the most part chosen out of the same caste as the sovereign himself. Nor were certain rights confined to the upper classes; the cultivators enjoyed specific rights which could not be infringed. In the time of Alexander " the cultivators contributed a fourth part of their crops to the sovereign; and as long as the husbandman continued to pay the government dues, the land occupied by him descended from generation to generation like private property"

The fourth part alluded to was the war-tax, which Porus and those Indian princes who opposed Alexander had a right to levy according to the law. "Even war" says Dr. Robertson "did not interrupt the labours of the husbandman, or endanger his property. It is not uncommon we are informed that, while two hostile armies were fighting a battle in one field the peasants were ploughing or reaping in another in perfect tranquillity". "It is not wonderful therefore" observes Dr Robertson "that the ancients (Greeks) should describe the Indians as a most happy race of men; and that the most intelligent modern observers should celebrate the equity, the humanity, and the mildness of Indian policy".

In respect to land tax of the Hindu Kingdom in the South which is taken as typical the author says as follows:—

The proportion of the land tax estimated at one sixth of the produce, was paid both in money and in kind. In the former case, the crop was valued at the average price of the day: and it was optional with the cultivator to pay in money or in grain.

Before commencing his inquiry into the land tax of the Mohemadans, our author after surveying over almost all important Kingdoms from Ceylon to Kashmir makes these observations.

' The preceding portion of the work, has, I trust proved that the occupant of the land alone was its sole proprietor; that the demand on him for contributing to the support of the state, was a sort of income-tax viz., a limited portion of the produce of his estate; and that this portion was fixed in time of peace, but liable to increase in the time of war, and that under all circumstances, it left a certain surplus profit to the owner equivalent to a rent.

A significant passage, is quoted from Todd's Rajastan to show how the idea of ownership in the soil was ingrained in the minds of the peasant proprietors.

"He (ryot) has even in his mouth the common, though expressive adage 'Bhogra dhanny raj ho,

Choom-sa dhanny maj ho. The taxes belong to the king and land belongs to me."

The following gives a lucid picture of the rural and town organisation of the Hindu state and in this picture is given the key for the correct understanding of the problems relating to land and local matters which are made complicated to us owing to all sorts of fantastic notions and theories born of ignorance or perversion. "Each territory was partitioned into townships or village corporations. Several villages formed a district, over which also presided a chief denominated Des-Adikar, and under whom was a record keeper, denominated Des-Lekuk. The former superintendent as the Gram-Adikar presided over the concerns of his village, and the Des-Lekuk received from the village clerks their accounts and presented an abstract to the Government. These latter officers were usually conciliated by the villages by assignment of land from each and were paid by the Government by a percentage of the collections. The proportion of each remuneration seems to have differed in various parts; though for the most part a tenth of the revenue divided between these district chiefs appears to have been the fee of office."

"As each village when it became enlarged into the capacity of a town, a certain number of each craft formed a corporate body like that of the agriculturists These bodies chose their chief or Alderman in the same way as the land-owners elected their mayor and through him the Government imposed its taxes on the ward and carried on its intercourse. In large cities there are aldermen of wards and corporations, the latter having their own Bye-laws and a court of adjudication for their own affairs.

The following is the Constitution and functions of village government. Each village contains within itself the seeds of an entire republican Government. It consists of agricultural corporation owning all the land at the head of whom is a chief elected by the corporation. It has also at least one individual of all the crafts necessary to agricultre and essential to the comforts of rural life. It consists of a head of the village, originally elected by the people whose office is confirmed by the king and is hereditary in the same family. This officer in the ancient law-book is termed Gram-Adikar, while his deputy or record keeper is styled Gram Lekuk. The other village officers are denominated Balowtay and are twelve in number. Besides there are twelve others denominated Alowtay Part, if not the whole, exists in every village from Ceylon to Cashmir. The land belonging to every township is accurately defined and the village officers above mentioned are retained on the spot by the assignment of a portion of it to each. These lots are usually situated on the borders of the village-limits in order to give to the hereditary officers a perfect knowledge under all circumstances of the boundary of the township. The whole land seems originally to have been divided into ten, twenty or more shares each having the names of the first settlers. The Government portion was originally paid in kind and its amount was taken from the gross produce estimated according to the quantity of the seed sown or according to the actual crop. Each cultivator contributed something as fees to all the village officers who received these fees in addition to the lands they occupied free of tax to the king. The Gram-Adikar or village mayor, originally elected by the people, was at the same time the representative of the inhabitants and of the Government. He decided disputes, either in person or by convening a court of arbitration: he was the head of the police; and the whole community was bound to produce to the Government either the properties or the thieves in case of robberies, and the guilty in more serious cases such as of murder. Besides the Government tax, an extra contribution was made for the village expenses, not unlike that of the parish rates in Europe. The most minute details of the transfer and sale of land, of rents and contracts as well as of receipts and disbursements were recorded by the village clerk or Gram-Lekuk under the authority of the Gram-Adikar, whose accounts are always open to inspection.

The above description almost corresponds to that stated in the Arthasastra although the latter does not give as much minute details as the former The Greek historians of the time of Alexander are said to have referred to these institutions. Briefly put, the State conducted its affairs, by means of the two corporate and Self-governing agencies—agricultural corporation or village government and the urban or city Government and it transacted its business through the Gram-Adikar or village mayor and aldermen of the city, without interfering with the internal affairs of these bodies.

There was no intermediatory agency, like Zemindars between the State and the village Governmnt and the Des-Adikar or the District Collector. received only his portion from the state revenue, alloted to him as salary from each Gram-Adikar under his jurisdiction. There were other officers civil and military as well as the royal relations were paid by the State in similar manner and they had no claim what-so-ever in the soil.

The chief features of the Hindu Polity, were decentralization and autonomy and such a polity favoured the growth of all robust qualities in man so much so that all arts of war and peace, found scopes for their highest possible development and it was the two self-governing institutions it fostered, that preserved our existence in times of anarchy and misrule while the ancient Roman society or mediaeval Europe under the dead weight of centralised and beaurocratic administration, which allowed no room for self-development came to a collapse along with the collapse of the State.

There is no doubt that the only form of tenure which the Hindu State promoted and fostered was peasant-proprietorship, and peasant proprietorship and agricultural prosperity went together, as they go together at this hour in the continental Europe.

It is through the instrumentality of the village-states, that the Hindu statesmanship from the Vedic times downwards had helped the growth of peasant-proprietorship and agricultural prosperity.

How the village governments were multiplied and developed and how with their aid the peasant proprietorship was promoted are things that deserve our careful study at this moment as they suggest several good points for the consideration of modern statesmen and economists.

To be continued.

Miscellaneous

The Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Bill.

Statement of Points against the Bill submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

By THE HINDU CONFERENCE, UDIPI.

Agreeably to Your Excellency's Private Secretary's telegram dated the 28th April 1923 to me, inviting expression of opinion on the Madras Hindu Religious Endowments Bill, I, the Secretary, Hindu Conference Deputation, Udipi, crave permission to approach Your Excellency with the following Statement of points against the said Bill which has been passed by the Madras Legislative Council on the 3rd of April 1923, in the teeth of such unprecedented and violent opposition

as has been seldom presented to any other legislative measure in recent times.

2. We and the vast mass of Hindus all over India are bound to Your Excellency in gratitude for so kindly reserving final consideration of this highly contentious and obnoxious measure.

3. With a view to avoid random criticism and secure reasoned, considered and responsible opinion, the Deputation called for a Meeting of prominent Hindus at Mangalore on the 26th May 1923, and invited expression of views from prominent members of Hindu public competent to pronounce an opinion. A draft Statement embodying the various views already received was prepared and placed before the meeting which finally approved and adopted the following :

INTRODUCTORY.

4. The Bill in dispute raises in the first period of the working of the Reform Act a problem of such magnitude and importance as, if not justly and promptly attended to by Government, is bound to produce the greatest consequences. We therefore request your Excellency to regard our representations as proceeding neither from interested quarters nor from any particular political party in the Country, but from the real bulk of the Hindu inhabitants of this Province. They feel that Religion which is of such fundamental importance to them in their daily life is now sought to be permanently and radically affected and its foundations visibly and wholly undermined by a measure which is far reaching in scope and character and which introduces quite a new policy of Government and dangerous and radical innovations affecting religious beliefs and institutions of millions of Hindus in this and other Provinces.

5. It must be stated here that it is now one of the universally accepted principles of orderly and peaceful administration to keep politics and religion apart. Any attempt to throw the latter into the maelstrom of the former to serve the political ends of any one section of the people, however strong and influential, is fraught with immense danger to the state. Such danger is in no way minimised because that section of the people making the attempt appears backed up by a majority and the opposing faction is a small minority.

6 Any oppressive legislation touching religion in which there can never be a basis of general agreement while there would always be present fundamental points of difference is certain to outrage some primary instinct of self-preservation, and obedience to such laws cannot be expected to be willingly given but might in all probability have to be secured through the instrumentality of force ending in passive resistence or active Civil strife. In such an event a minority would feel itself under no moral obligation to obey and would surely resist the operation of such laws to its utmost capacity. The most democratic of conventions cannot help crumbling under such a contingency.

7. In spite of the advance of civilization and the universal change in the outlook on religion and society, the moment, any section of the people scents danger, however remote and uncertain, to their long-cherished ideas of religious beliefs and worship, a hue and cry is immediately raised and no sacrifice is considered too great to be made to avert the real or supposed danger to their religion. To such natural instinct of the human species must be ascribed the Indian Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, the Protestant agitation led by prominant Englishmen against His Majesty's recent visit to the Pope, the refuse of Ulster to join the Irish Free State, the Akali struggle and the Khilafat agitation. When however the danger becomes real and those that are affected are powerless to retaliate, sufferings and death are preferred to meek submission. The powerless minority does by its sufferings excite universal indignation and resentment against the Government for having given room for such situations to arise, enlist the sympathies of even those who are outside its own native country and who do not identify themselves with the party in power but keep an open mind on the subject, and ultimately becomes a powerful combination too gigantic to be thwarted. Anti-Catholic Laws of Russia, the Judicial murders of the Clergy and the deliberate refusal of the Soviet to abandon the mad career into which it has plunged, the universal outburst of indignation against the Soviet among people professing different or even antagonistic religious faiths are a few of the recent instances of the danger of dragging religion into the vortex of politics.

8. If the Legislation under reference concerned the Matadhipathies and Temple Trustees in their individual and personal capacities only they would have been left to themselves to make out a case against it. The foregoing aspect of the case coupled with the impending danger to the various sects of Hindu Religion, should the Bill become Law, has rallied round the banner of opposition the best intellects of the land, men of all shades of political opinion and prominent scholars who would otherwise prefer to keep clear of the political whirlpool.

9. We would therefore urge upon Your Excellency that our representations should be regarded as proceeding from persons who have been obliged only by a grave sense of duty to place before the Government of India their views in a matter of life and death to the vast masses of Hindu population.

10. We wish at the outset most emphatically to repudiate the final statement in the Legislative Council, made by the Minister-in charge of the Bill, the Rajah of Panagal that poisonous gases that were raised by the agitators and that would have asphyxiated the judgement of the Madras Legislative Council were neutralised by the antidote by the discrimination on the part of the Members of Council. The nature and constitution of the present Council are well known and it is notorious that the Ministry is backed up by a solid party based exclusively on communal feeling artificially fanned and kept alive. The so-called opposition in the Legislative Council equally stands discredited as merely seeking to attack the exclusively communal position of the other party. Neither the party in power nor any member of the Council who may oppose it can be said to approach public questions of this importance in a calm and dispassionate spirit and free from the acutely factious spirit which as is well known invariably characterises the proceedings and the debates of the Madras Legislative Council ever since the Reform Act. No importance therefore should be attached to the views of the party in power in the Legislative Council.

11. At the outset it should be remembered that the Bill was literally rushed through and the Ministry gave the public no time to make itself fully acquainted with the provisions of the Bill as originally introduced or what is far more important with the radically changed provisions of the Bill as settled by the majority of the members of the Select Committee. The Bill was first published in English on the 5th December 1922 and in the four Vernaculars on the 12th December 1922 in the Fort St. George Gazette. Publication in the Official Gazette was no guarantee that its provisions became known to the public. It was introduced into the Council on the 18th December last before a week had elapsed from its publication in the Vernaculars in the Official Gazette. The first sitting of the Select Committee was on the 8th January 1923 and it gave time to the public only till the 22nd January to submit representations on the Bill and requests for the examination of witnesses. The Select Committe sat in February and it considered its final draft and the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill was published in the Fort St. George Gazette only on the 6th of March 1923 for general information and it was taken up by the Legislative Council on the 25th March and passed on the 3rd of April. These facts are sufficient to show that the Ministry had a particular object in view for rushing through the Bill and establish conclusively that there could not have been that full and prolonged consideration which a Bill of this nature

requires both from the public and from the members of the Legislative Council. As a necessary consequence the provisions of the Bill are inconsistent and betray inferior draftsmanship promising numerous difficulties in the future.

12. Nor should a Bill of this nature and importance have been passed at the close of the period of the Council. It should have been left to be considered by the New Council after being placed before the electorates that will return members to the New Council. That the party in power really feared to give time and wanted to rush through this Bill lest it should be defeated in the new Council, was made clear by the Minister-in-charge in his reply to the motion for adjournment. The Rajah of Panagal said :—

> "If elections intervened, he was afraid that those who had been reported to be abusing their trusts would take this opportunity to tamper with the elections and the result would be disastrous. It was very likely that their money would be in full play when the next elections come in. On this political ground he did think it would be dangerous to grant any adjournment".

This authoritative statement of the Chief Minister about the "disastrous results" to be expected of the succeeding Council and Ministry after the next elections, really indicates that the provisions of the Bill are so unwholesome in character and mischievous in their effect and so violently against the long established religious and social order of the country, that they cannot bear examination by any Council other than the present. Bribery is a mere pretence and a frivolous argument to conceal the real motive for hurrying the Bill. This hatred and impatience of criticism was also pointedly brought out in the speech made by Sir P. Thyagaraya Chetty, the leader of the present Ministerial Party, on 21st April 1923 at the first Nellore District Non-Brahmin Conference held at Kovur wherein he characterises the agitation against the Bill as "unholy, unscrupulous and retrograde" while, as a matter of fact, it would be more proper to attribute the hurried passage of this Bill to the unscrupulous, sectarian and political motives of the party in power. A small political party organised on communal hatred, easily got into power owing to the Non-Co-operation Movement and has rushed this legislation through to perpetuate its power and to secure its own communal interests, the Opposition in the Council being weak and disorganised and the public really interested being studiously denied all opportunity for effective criticism. It is the plain duty of the Government to prevent the exploitation of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments by such a party merely for consolidating its power and position.

13. It is a well known fact that in the beginning of party Government when only one party is in possession of undisputed power due to the absence of other party organisation and when party feelings are hot the issues are apt to turn upon religion, and religious persecution of the lesser parties follows as a consequence. But the results of such short-sighted statesmanship have invariably been disastrous to Governments that permitted the parties in power to do as they pleased. The Kulturkampf laws of Germany passed during the Chancellorship of Prince Bismarck though directed principally against the Catholic Clergy provoked such an amount of violent opposition from the people as to land Germany in Civil strife amounting almost to armed rebellion. They had at last to be repealed in the interests of peace and order. The anti-Protestant legislation, during the sovereignty of the I Charles and the II James of England, the Anti-Jewish laws of European States in force till our own times and a host of other obnoxious Religious legislation can be directly or indirectly traced to party feelings let loose to run riot. The evil consequences to the State arising out of such unbridled party power have since become too patent to be ignored and no Government desiring peace and order should countenance indiscriminate exercise of such power in any matter touching religion however remotely.

14. That the Bill under reference is a product of intense party feeling is an open secret. The party in power makes no attempt at concealment of its antipathy to Brahmins as a class. Although there are Non-Brahmin Mutts, they are only a very few in number. Even in these Mutts and Temples under Non-Brahmin trustees almost the entire staff consists of Brahmins and the emoluments and perquisites pertaining to the various offices go to Brahmins. The inference that the blow is directed mainly against Brahmins becomes necessarily irresistible. The legislation is therefore on a par with the instances quoted above.

Further, this Bill is not the result of real public opinion. The people who are really interested in matters dealt with by this Bill and affected by its provisions, are those who have deep religious feelings and who have genuine and living faith in the maintenance of these ancient institutions on the same lines as hitherto and without any outside control or interference. Such people hardly take any interest in politics and we venture to state that even the Hindu members of the Madras Legislative Council cannot represent their views or feelings. The general electorate in the last elections never imagined that any legislation affecting their religious institutions would be brought up before the Council and cannot therefore be deemed to have given the elected members any mandate, direct or indirect in regard to such legislation. The present would certainly not be the kind of members whose opinion any real and religiously-minded Hindu would care to consider in connection with any reform of Hindu religious institutions or their administration. Most of the Hindu members being products of Western education and partial towards Western civilisation are non-believers in Vedic or Shastric religious principles, social reformers who consider many of these principles to be impediments to political progress, haters of Brahmins whose emoluments and propitiation form a prominent feature of the daily religious and social life of the Hindus or sympathisers of the Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj. Such a body is not likely to bestow any serious thought on the grave effect the Bill is likely to have on Mutts and Temples whose real usefulness largely consists in their adherence to orthodox practices and principles. The aim of such members and their supporters is to introduce innovations into these institutions with a view to make them subserve their own ideas of rational religion and social and political progress.

15. The principles of religious neutrality cannot be departed from in the slightest degree unless and until there is Self government of a purely national type. The Reform Act in making Religious and Charitable Endowments a transferred subject cannot be held to depart from that principle. The reformed Government is as alien in character and in all essential matters as it was before and consequently inherits along with it the same privileges and the same liabilities as the pre-reform Government owed to the vast masses of its Indian subjects during its regime. All that the change means is only that such work as used to be done by an Executive Council is to be now done by the Ministry. The scope and character of the limits of interference and non-interference in connection with Religious and Charitable Endowments is not enlarged by a transfer of the portfolio, but must remain subject to the same constitutional and political considerations as inspired the principle of neutrality guaranteed so often in the most solemn manner. At the outset we would press upon the Government the duty to continue that policy of non-intervention so that Hindu Religious and Charitable foundations should have the same independence of a political Government as before, subject only in the last resort to the inevitable ascertainment of customs and rights and the settlement of disputes by the ordinary tribunals not swayed by political and communal considerations. On questions dealing with the management of such endow-

ments, the Hindus claim, as the Mahomedans and the Sikhs do, that their religion and therefore their religious institutions and their administration shall under no circumstances and in no degree be controlled, governed, supervised, advised or influenced by a Government constituted as at present. The Legislative Council consists of Mahomedans, Christians, Europeans, Anti-Brahmins and Anti-Hindus, iconoclastic Arya Samajists, Social reformers and rationalists &c.

16 In the nature of things religious foundations require to be managed in consonance with the traditions of the particular sect or community concerned in a very real sense as orthodox representatives of the current usages and tradition relating to those foundations. No reformers whose ideas may be foreign to those of the community, no principles of a supposed progressive civilisation not admitted by the general public as applicable in religious matters can be allowed by a Government if it is solicitous of the welfare of the public or claims to uphold strict religious neutrality. The real responsibility for general administration and legislation of such importance still vests in the British Government and its settled and beneficient policy of religious neutrality cannot therefore be violated by permitting legislation of this kind.

II. THE BILL

17. The Bill also provides for an elaborate and expensive machinery to carry out the directions and the policy of the Board and the Government, and the Board is entrusted with exceptional powers of framing and initiating new schemes of administration, vide; Cl. 59 (1) and (2) of appointing hereditary trustees and heads of Mutts; vide Cl. 38, and of diverting surplus funds with the assistance of Courts (which may mean even Munsiff's Courts vide; Cl 5. sub Cl. 3) to objects which they may consider to be reasonable Vide; Cl. 63 (1). In some cases from 1842 and emphatically from 1863 in all cases, the Government has had nothing to do directly with the administration of the Temples and other Religious endowments. As regards the Mutts they had no sort of connection or control at any time. It was found advisable by experience that even such control as the Board possessed over the Temples should be withdrawn and that was the reason for the Act of 1863 and the principle was clearly laid down in Sec. 22 of that Act.

> "It shall not be lawful after the passing of this Act for any officer of any Government in India or for an officer of any Government in his official character to undertake or resume the superintendence of any land or other property granted for the support of or otherwise belonging to any Mosque, Temple, or other religious establishment, or to take any part in the management or appropriation of, any endowment made for the maintenance of any such Mosque, temple, or other establishment, or to nominate or appoint any trustee, manager or superintendent thereof, or to be in any way concerned therewith."

The present Bill is a total reversal of that policy. It not only resumes superintendence which was relinquished in 1842 and 1863 over Temples but it takes charge of the Mutts. Clause 76 of the Bill is a mere "mockery," now a nugatory provision having regard to the active interference expressly provided for by the Bill.

18. In the next place we would urge upon the Government of India that the special feature of this Bill is materially to oust the jurisdiction hitherto existing of Civil Courts in the settlement of disputes and to replace it, to a very large extent by a Board of Commissioners for all the Religious Endowments of this Province. The constitution of this Board was not at all contemplated in the original draft Bill of December last and it has been included by the Select Committee as an innovation. The qualifications of the President of the Board only are prescribed in the clause 8 (2) of the Bill and although it was explained by the Minister that they are the same as those required for a High Court Judge, there is vast difference in the emoluments provided, being only Rs. 1200 and in the limited tenure of 5 years. No other members of the Board require legal qualifications even though the Board had to function as a judicial tribunal for settlement of disputes of complicated nature. For the salary fixed at a ridiculously low figure with the period of appointment too short to be attractive, there is no probability of securing the services of competent men to serve as President and members of the Board. Again, low qualifications of incumbents, short duration of office and the low scale of salary with no prospects of any increment, pension or gratuity or even a permanency of office beyond the period fixed, all these tend to show that the Board is intended to be manned by persons of ministerial choice to render it amenable to the influence of the party in power.

19. This Board is appointed by the Local Government and consists of salaried members. They can be suspended or removed or re appointed by the Government and they are therefore under the control of Government. Such a small salaried Board as is provided by the Bill must in the nature of things necessarily carry out the policy of the Government and they certainly cannot have the independence of the ordinary Courts of the Country. The political party in power may desire for the time being to advance the tenets of one religious sect or to discourage and put down the tenets of another sect. With this Board presided over by an England-returned Barrister who probably had never visited a temple or a Mutt and who would under existing religious rules, not be allowed to enter, the Government can easily carry out their ideas of religious reforms. For instance, they may think the objects upon which the funds of a temple or Mutt are at present spent—such as worship of idols, feeding of Brahmins, encouraging Vedic or Religious learning etc.,—are barbarous and useless and should be replaced by objects which suggest themselves as more suitable and utilitarian to men of loose religious views and of cosmopolitan habits of living and with ideals which the community at large still true to orthodox Hindu ideals would regard as more or less sacrilegious. We know for instance the party in power consists of men who are stalwart champions of the microscopic Brahmo Samaj movement, in other words, they are against the Temples and Shraddhas which are dear to the Hindus. They believe in Chapel worship and new prayers which are foreign to the usage of Hindu community and regard the existing Hindu practices as grossly idolatrous. Again, we know, for instance, that some of the prominent members of the Ministerial party are openly opposed to Vedic and Shastraic practices and have, in their hatred of Brahmins who are indispensable for their Shraddhas and other religious functions, dispensed with those functions or begun to perform them without Brahmins.

20. Further, the party in power holds itself bound to make no distinction between Adi-Dravidas and High-Caste Hindus and some of the prominent leaders of this party and those who have voted for the Bill have many times spoken in public that the Temples should be thrown open to the untouchable caste. All these preachings have however fallen till now only on deaf ears. The bulk of Hindus, especially of this Province, rightly or wrongly continue to cherish and follow the usages and customs of their fore-fathers from which course even a Gandhi failed to turn them. It is therefore madness to think that they will take kindly to the root and branch innovation which this piece of legislation aims at or is capable of introducing in their religious affairs. But yet the Ministery will want, as naturally men in power will, to give effect to their ideas in one or other of these directions through the agency of the Board.

The opportunity afforded by direct supervision and control and, more than that, by that indirect influence which in all ages and at all times men in power have over those who are placed in a position of subordination

to them, will be utilised consciously and unconsciously for the purpose of making the religious institutions of the Hindus less Hindu and more Brahmo Samajist, more cosmopolitan and "rational" and less in consonance with Shastraic rituals and traditions. The kind of attempt that must inevitably be made if the Bill becomes law will be widely and actively resisted by othodox individuals and sects and communities unless it is assumed — an assumption which nobody dares to make—that the whole community has progressed up to the ideals of social reform and materialistic civilisation professed by the party in power.

21. We have no doubt therefore that the Government in its own interests and in the interests of peace and order should withhold assent to this Bill. The party in power may assume that the resistance will not be immediate or appreciable. But that assumption is certain to be disproved when the Board gets into grip with these institutions. All sections of the public are not yet aware of the important provisions of the Bill or its effects. But when it is put into practical application this legislation will crumble to pieces, as far greater attempts made by real religious reformers filled with revolutionary religious zeal have time and again failed in the History of India in their efforts to alter the direction or to change the spirit of Hinduism But the party in power which will be in power for as long a time as Ministers are chosen on the footing of communal preponderance in numbers will use the Board and the Committees organised under this Bill as agencies to give effect to their own views on social and religious progress.

To be continued.

Olla Podrida.

I have been busy for sometime past with nothing and less than nothing—two eternal verities which have occupied man's attention and claimed his worship from the dawn of time. Hence it is that I have had no time for Olla Podrida.

***

I have now grown wiser. He who devotes himself entirely to breadwinning is a fool. God gives to man enough for spending a fraction of himself in the service of Mother Nature to win enough for his body. He who spends more than that fraction commits breach of trust as rest is to go to man and to God.

***

But in our country he who devotes himself to literature and art and service is an even greater fool. Our countrymen do not want all this. They want but words, words, words. They cannot unite for any purpose good or bad. They will not praise; they dare not blame.

***

In such a country is it wonderful that a few days ago the Zamindar of Lahore counselled the mahomedans to kill more cows on the Bakrid day because of the Shuddhi movement of the Hindus. Surely human folly has been very much in evidence since 1914.

***

More wonders yet! Sir T. Sadasiva Iyer has treated us recently to wise words about Caste-Panchamas and Adi-Dravada Brahmanas. He said that he looked to the latter to restore the purity of Hinduism. He said further: "The caste-proud Hindu (especially if he is Brahmana *by reputed and presumed* birth) is incapable of true humility and selfless devotion." O Acharyas, beware you have no humility or devotion. Just look at the mosquito sting in the words "reputed and presumed birth." Judges are always experts in adjectival and parenthetical clauses and are so very accurate in regard to their words and ideas and facts that they are always wrong in all respects. Sir. T. Sadasiva Iyer concluded by saying 'I have committed more sins and suffered for some of them.' Truth will out.

***

Mr. R. K. Shanmugam told the world recently about Hinduism's negation of life. How many expounders and improvers of Hinduism we have.

***

One of the most astounding of counter-revolutions is taking place. America is supposed to have gone dry some years ago. I wonder if it went dry really. America is the land of self-advertisement. Everything is done there on a colossal scale. As Richard Garnett says,

" How shall the giantess of gold and clay,
Girt with two oceans, crowned with Arctic snow,
Sandalled with shining seas of Mexico,
Be pared to trim proportion in a day!
Thou art too great! Thy million-billowed surge
Of life bewilders speech, as shoreless sea
Compounding the ranging eye from Verge to Verge
With mazy strife or smooth immensity."

***

Whatever it be, America is turning wet again. State after State is refusing to enforce the Prohibition law. But Scrutator knew this already. Oh these Western and European races are sworn to pleasure and will not give it up. The thin veneer of Christianity is nowhere. Power and pleasure—these are the twin-Gods of their worship.

***

What is Pussyfoot going to do? Lose his other eye in his own land? Fortunately for him he finished his triumphant world-tour before ever-changing America—that Chameleon among nations—changed again. Meanwhile India is getting drunk with the wine of speeches and there seems to be no hope of its ever turning dry. Industrial, scientific, literary, artistic and religious work is nowhere!

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